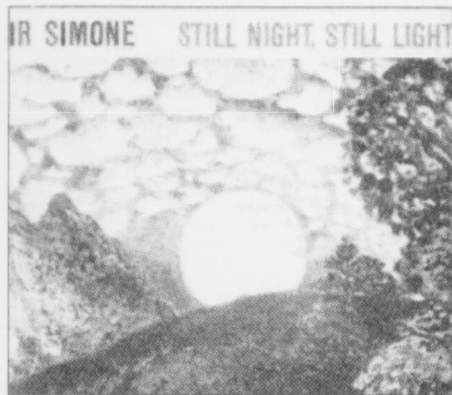


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MUSTANG DAILY

CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY



Au Revoir
Simone release
"Still Night Still
Light" surprises
with contempla-
tive songwriting.
IN ARTS, 3



Baghdad
bombings kills
3 U.S. soldiers,
dozens of
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Cal Poly's
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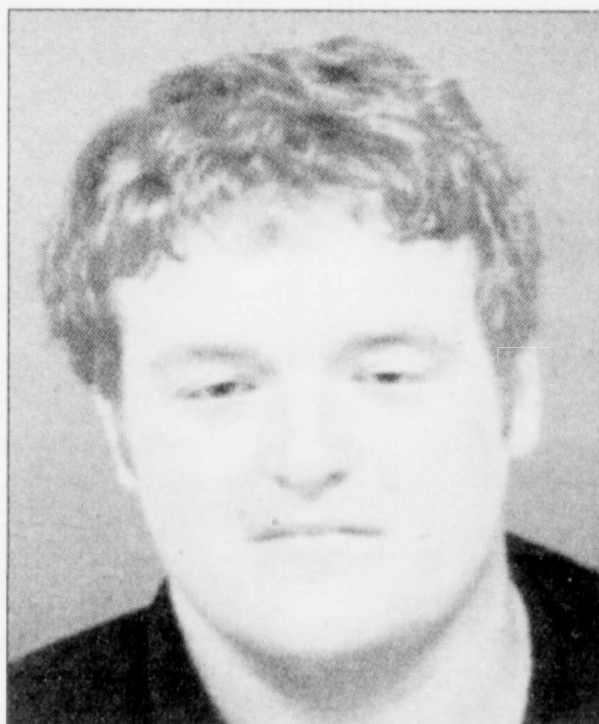
Friday, May 22, 2009

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4 Cal Poly students charged in connection to Starkey's death



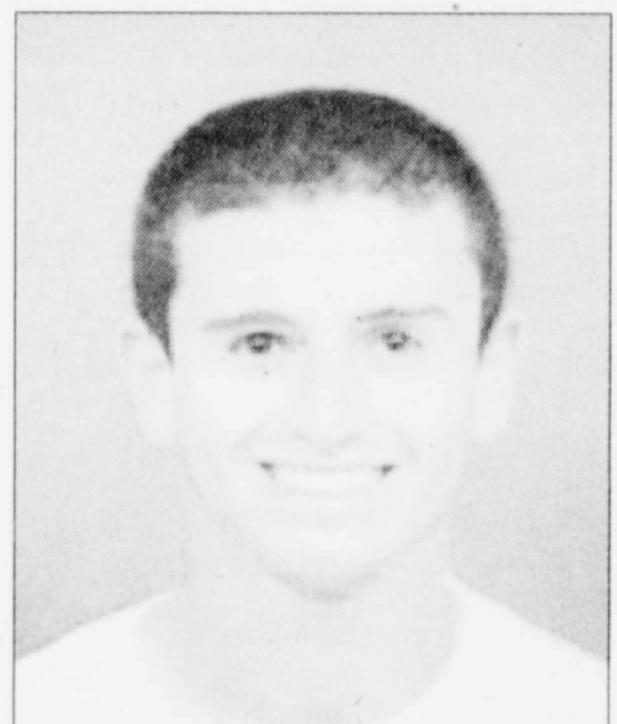
Taylor



Marszal



Ellis



Ibrahim COURTESY PHOTOS

Matt Fountain
MUSTANG DAILY

Four Cal Poly students were arrested Thursday in connection with last year's alcohol-related death of architecture freshman Carson Starkey after a nearly six-month investigation by the San Luis Obispo Police Department.

Investigators say the death was the result of a night of excessive drinking as part of a hazing ritual for pledges in the Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity.

Agriculture business sophomore Haithem Ibrahim, 20, of

Lafayette and agriculture senior Zacary Ellis, 22, of San Luis Obispo were each charged with one felony violation of hazing causing death or great bodily injury and one misdemeanor violation of permitting a minor to consume alcohol. Computer engineering senior Russell Taylor, 22, of Fresno and agriculture business senior Adam Marszal, 21, were each charged with two misdemeanor counts of the same violations.

The four surrendered themselves Thursday morning after warrants were obtained for their arrests and were booked at the San Luis Obispo County Jail. Bail was set at \$50,000 for the felony charges and \$10,000 for the misdemeanors. Each posted

bail by Thursday afternoon.

If convicted, the suspects could face up to three years in state prison for the felonies and up to a year in county jail for the misdemeanor charges.

At a press conference at the San Luis Obispo police station Thursday afternoon, San Luis Obispo Police Department Chief of Police Deborah Linden said the investigation "exposed a ritual that was as disturbing as it was deadly."

see Arrest, page 2

Greeks don boxing gloves for good cause

Rachel Glas
MUSTANG DAILY

Fighting and philanthropy normally don't go hand-in-hand but Sigma Phi Epsilon's third annual Fight Night will change that.

The boxing event this Sunday will raise money for Sigma Phi Epsilon brother and Cal Poly student John Murphy who was severely injured last July after falling out the window of his fourth-story hotel room. Murphy sustained massive head trauma among other injuries and underwent six surgeries.

"John's undergoing an extensive recovery process," said Sigma Alpha Epsilon president Casey Shadel. "We thought this was a good way to raise money and help with the medical expenses."

For the past two years, the events raised money for Sigma Phi Epsilon's national philanthropy, youth AIDS.

To garner sign ups, members of Sigma Phi Epsilon visited other fraternities and asked for brothers to sign up. Participants have been training for two months with SLO Kickboxing in order to learn how to box, since a substantial number of the fighters have no previous experience.

There will be approximately eight to 10 fights, though the numbers are subject to change. According to materials engineering sophomore and Sigma Alpha Epsilon brother Alex Doyle, only about 30 percent of those who originally sign up end up participating due to the extensive training regime and time commitment.

Each fight will consist of three one and a half minute rounds. Though there will be no prizes; winners get "the gratitude of winning a one-on-one fight," said Doyle.

see Fight, page 2

Dead rat, mouse found in Cal Poly water reservoir



CASSANDRA CARLSON MUSTANG DAILY

A maintenance worker inspects a reservoir near the Cal Poly "P". The reservoir was shut down Thursday morning for disinfection following the discovery of a dead rat and mouse in the water. The rodents were only discovered after the pumps went down during a Wednesday power-outage. The reservoir supplies potable drinking water to the Cal Poly campus. Two years ago, a lizard was found in one of the Cal Poly water reservoirs, and the potential health hazards of that incident prompted school officials to shut off the campus water supply. In yesterday's case, officials decided the rodent discovery prompted no health hazard.

Go online to mustangdaily.net for the full story.

Arrest

continued from page 1

"Despite being illegal and against formal greek organization policies, dangerous hazing rituals remain part of the culture of certain groups; a culture that claims to promote leadership and value friendship, but which fails to protect young and impressionable recruits who simply want to belong," Linden said.

"Carson's death was the result of a crime and it was entirely preventable," she said. "Tragically, his death was not the first resulting from a fraternity hazing ritual, and unless the greeks change their culture in a fundamental and meaningful way, it will not be the last."

When asked by reporters why the investigation took nearly six months, Linden cited the "sheer volume of the people involved," and the lack of "clear and open" cooperation by SAE members throughout the investigation.

Starkey, 18, passed away the morning of Dec. 2, 2008, at Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center. An autopsy revealed the cause of death was respiratory arrest due to acute ethanol toxicity, or alcohol poisoning. His blood alcohol content was estimated between .39 and .447 percent — a level equivalent to the effects of surgical anesthesia. It was determined that no marijuana or other drugs were in Starkey's system.

Starkey came to Cal Poly as a freshman from Austin, Texas, in September 2008 and began the pledge process to SAE in October. The death occurred during the fraternity's "Big Bro Week," where pledges, or "Little Brothers," are paired with active members, or "Big Brothers." Ibrahim was designated as Starkey's Big Brother.

The investigation revealed that the night of Dec. 1 was "Brown Bag Night," an annual pledge event where Big Brothers provided each pledge with a brown bag containing large quantities of alcohol. Ibrahim, Taylor and Marszal allegedly selected and purchased the alcohol from two stores

in San Luis Obispo.

Ellis was SAE's designated Pledge Educator, a membership position that helps leads pledging recruits through their pledging process. On the night before Starkey's death, Ellis reportedly instructed the group of 17 pledges — all of whom were under 21 — to consume the full contents of their bag within an hour and a half. In addition to the contents of the bags, pledges were also given a bottle of 151 proof Everclear, which has roughly twice the alcohol content of normal liquor.

The investigation found that at some point in the night, Starkey became unresponsive, at which point several SAE members placed him in a vehicle in an apparent attempt to take him to the hospital, removing his pledge pin to prevent him from being associated with the fraternity. The SAE members reportedly returned Starkey to the house, however, once he began vomiting inside the vehicle.

The SAE members allegedly carried Starkey to bed and checked on him until approximately 2 a.m. After he was found unresponsive a few hours later, an SAE member called 911 and began performing CPR. He was taken via ambulance to Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center where he was pronounced dead.

One of the suspected SAE members, Russell Taylor, currently serves on the Associated Students, Inc. Board of Directors for the College of Engineering. When discussing one of ASI's board members being arrested on suspicion of hazing, current ASI president Angela Kramer said, "It's especially difficult because we don't want to see him in this situation, but the fraternity (made) a bad decision that led to the death of a student. Our country has due process for a reason."

"It's really difficult when any member of our campus community is involved in a situation like this," she added. "It was a devastating tragedy to lose Carson Starkey, but (I think it was) no one's direct fault; there's no sign of malicious intent."

In a statement issued by the Starkey



MATT FOUNTAIN MUSTANG DAILY

San Luis Obispo Police Department Police Chief Deborah Linden detailed investigation results regarding Carson Starkey's death.

family on Thursday, the family thanked the San Luis Obispo Police Department and lashed out at the "long-standing, dangerous pledging rituals" of the fraternity system.

"Only someone else who has lost a child can begin to comprehend our family's pain and sorrow. Our grief is deepened by the fact that Carson's death was not due to a natural cause like a disease or illness," the statement read.

"Carson was an excellent student who aspired to be an architect but also, unfortunately, aspired to become a fraternity member and he participated in a dangerous fraternity ritual during which he was compelled to drink a fatal amount of alcohol. His death was not caused by 'voluntarily' drinking too much, and anyone who might suggest otherwise is misinformed."

The family added, "We will honor Carson and other families by doing everything we can to end dangerous misconduct by fraternities and their members. So, today, we express our gratitude to the police and prosecutors for understanding our loss and assisting us in this first of many steps towards achieving change and justice."

Cal Poly president Warren Baker

also released a statement Thursday, restating the university's zero tolerance policy towards hazing.

"The university has investigated more than a dozen students who may have been involved in this tragic event," Baker said.

"As a result of those investigations and as an outcome of the campus disciplinary process, nine students have either permanently withdrawn from Cal Poly or been suspended for at least one academic year. Our investigations into other students who may have been involved are continuing."

"We have initiated several new programs designed to eliminate hazing and promote responsible social behaviors. Among those programs are required training sessions for student leaders of greek pledge activities," Baker added. "We also are hiring two staff people who will devote 100 percent of their time to working with and educating all fraternity and sorority members on these issues."

The charter of the San Luis Obispo chapter of SAE remains suspended indefinitely.

— Marlyze van Romburgh and Giana Magnoli contributed to this report.

Fight

continued from page 1

Fight Night will take place at The Graduate in San Luis Obispo, which will be importing a boxing ring for the day. SLO Kickboxing employees will referee the event. All participants will be outfitted in headgear and clothes to minimize injuries.

Though some may think this event pits fraternities against each other, Casey says that's not the case.

"It's a really fun event," he said. "It's a sport, not really fighting, and actually brings all the greeks together to support one another together; everyone is really supportive of all the fighters."

Doyle agreed. "It's fun," he said. "Every fighter gets their own walk-up song played by a DJ and there's a raffle where you can win a 34 inch flat screen television, food, drinks."

"It's a great event to support John and his family," Casey said. "He's not only a member of the greek system, but a fellow Cal Poly student who has gone through a tragedy. Having 500 people stand behind him on a physical level, just seeing them all there would say so much."

VIP tickets, which puts the observer eye-level of the ring, cost \$25 and regular tickets are \$10. The event will start at 2 p.m. on Sunday.

Obama fights to take command of Guantanamo debate

Jennifer Loven
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama fought Thursday to retake command of the emotional debate over closing Guantanamo, denouncing "fear-mongering" by political opponents and insisting that maximum-security prisons in the U.S. can safely house dangerous terror suspects transferred from Cuba.

Obama made his case moments before former Vice President Dick

Cheney delivered his own address defending the Bush administration's creation of the prison camp as vigorously as the new president denounced it.

Obama, appearing at the National Archives said shutting down Guantanamo would "enlist our values" to make America safer. Speaking a day after an overwhelming congressional rebuke to his pledge to close the prison, he forcefully declared the camp a hindrance — not a help — to preventing future terrorist attacks. He contends that the prison, which has

held hundreds of detainees for years without charges or trials, motivates U.S. enemies overseas.

The president promised to work with lawmakers to develop "an appropriate legal regime" for those who can't be tried and are too dangerous to be released. Still, he did not provide the level of detail about his plans that lawmakers, including Democrats, demanded in a 90-6 Senate vote denying money for the shutdown on Wednesday.

Liberals have expressed dismay at what they view as a Democratic president acting much like his predecessor.

They cite Obama's moves to reverse himself and fight the court-ordered release of prisoner-abuse photos, to revive military tribunals for some terror suspects (although he is revamping how they would work), to oppose a truth commission to investigate past detainee treatment and to continue using in some cases Bush's "state secrets" doctrine that claims unchecked presidential power to prevent information disclosure in court.

In his speech, Obama backed down from none of these positions, and defended them all. Human rights and civil liberties groups, given a personal preview of the speech by the president a day earlier, were not assuaged.

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Briefs

State

SANTA MARIA, Calif. (AP) — A former Santa Barbara County psychologist convicted of sexually abusing female patients has now pleaded guilty to sexual exploitation of another patient.

Fernando Cordero, who worked for Santa Barbara County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services in Santa Maria and taught sexology at Hancock College, entered the felony plea on Wednesday.

ORANGE, Calif. (AP) — Police say a student carrying two air pellet rifles that he was planning to use as acting props brought a search of an Orange County college.

Orange police Sgt. Dan Adams says many calls shortly after 8 p.m. Wednesday reported a person carrying a gun in a parking lot of Santiago Canyon College.

Adams says officers spotted a truck with what appeared to be magazines from a rifle. They then saw a man walk up carrying two Airsoft rifles in a case.

Adams says the man told officers the guns were for an acting class for "some sort of war scenario."

The student was questioned but released after he was deemed not a threat. Earlier, police questioned a man toting a similar gun on the nearby University of California, Irvine campus. He also was questioned but not arrested.

National

JOLIET, Ill. (AP) — An autopsy performed Thursday on a headless, armless skeleton found along the Des Plaines River yielded inconclusive results, leaving questions about whether the badly decomposed body was one of two women whose disappearances have drawn national media attention.

The skeletal remains were not enough to determine an identity, race or gender of the corpse, Will County Coroner Patrick O'Neil's office said in a statement.

PADUCAH, Ky. (AP) — An ex-soldier convicted of raping and killing an Iraqi teen and murdering her family was spared the death penalty Thursday and will serve a life sentence after jurors couldn't agree unanimously on a punishment for a brutal crime that the defense blamed partly on combat stress and a lack of military leadership.

After an afternoon of card playing, sex talk and drinking Iraqi whiskey, Pfc. Steven Dale Green, 24, of Midland, Texas, and three other soldiers in March 2006 went to the home of 14-year-old Abeer Qassim al-Janabi near Mahmoudiya, about 20 miles south of Baghdad. Green shot and killed the teen's mother, father and sister, then became the third soldier to rape the girl before shooting her in the face.

International

PARIS (AP) — A thousand French Internet users a day could be taken off-line following approval of President Nicolas Sarkozy's pet project — an unprecedented law to cut the Internet connections of people who repeatedly pirate music and movies.

As the husband of supermodel-turned-pop star Carla Bruni and friend to some of France's most powerful media figures, Sarkozy has long basked in his cozy ties with the entertainment industry, which has embraced the measure.

But many in Europe have denounced it, saying government controls needed to enforce the law could open the way for invasive state monitoring that violate privacy.

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Donations to help refugees fleeing Pakistan's latest offensive against the Taliban surpassed \$200 million Thursday, as the country's allies sought to ease a crisis that risks eroding public support for military action against the militants.

About 1.9 million people have fled the fighting in the Swat Valley and surrounding areas, a mountainous region not far from the Afghan border where the Taliban have found safe haven in recent years. More than 160,000 are staying in sweltering camps just south of the battle zone; the rest have been taken in by relatives.

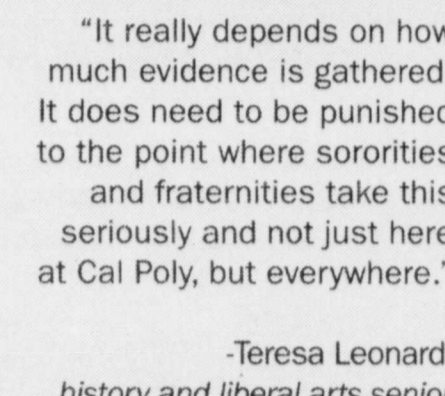
WORD ON THE STREET

"Should the students connected with Carson Starkey's death suffer any consequences?"



"I think that the law should handle it. I think they should be punished with accordance to the law."

-Kevin Wahlberg,
chemistry senior



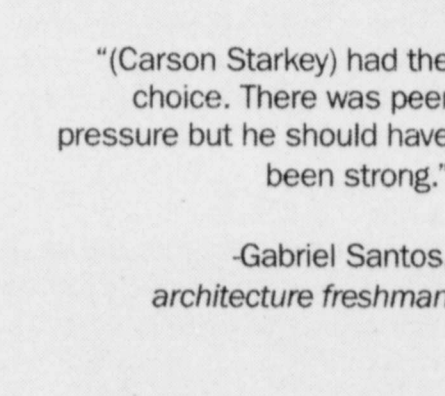
"It really depends on how much evidence is gathered. It does need to be punished to the point where sororities and fraternities take this seriously and not just here at Cal Poly, but everywhere."

-Teresa Leonard,
history and liberal arts senior



"I think they should take responsibility for what they did. (In) using that kind of hazing they could instead use something that does not involve alcohol."

-Jillian Rice,
history freshman



"(Carson Starkey) had the choice. There was peer pressure but he should have been strong."

-Gabriel Santos,
architecture freshman

-COMPILED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY CASSIE CARLSON AND LAUREN RABAINO

AP poll: Many students stressed, some depressed

Nancy Benac
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stress over grades. Financial worries. Trouble sleeping. Feeling hopeless.

So much for those carefree college days.

The vast majority of college students are feeling stressed these days, and significant numbers are at risk of depression, according to an Associated Press-mtv-U poll.

Eighty-five percent of the students reported feeling stress in their daily lives in recent months, with worries about grades, school work, money and relationships the big culprits.

At the same time, 42 percent said they had felt down, depressed or hopeless several days during the past two weeks, and 13 percent showed signs of being at risk for at least mild depression, based on the students' answers to a series of questions that medical practitioners use to diagnose depressive illness.

These students complained of trouble sleeping, having

little energy or feeling down or hopeless — and most hadn't gotten professional help. Eleven percent had had thoughts that they'd be better off dead or about hurting themselves.

That's not just a case of the blues to be shrugged off by taking a break with Facebook or going for a workout.

Kristin Potts, who graduated from Penn State last week with a 4.0 in chemistry and will go on for a master's, says she's seen warning signs among fellow classmates.

"I had a couple friends who didn't come out of their rooms very much," she said. "I tried my hardest not to be like that, but I definitely saw it."

At the University of Maryland in College Park, students were sobered by two suicides within two weeks this past semester.

"It was pretty scary," says Aimee Mayer, a junior studying psychology. She says there's lots of information and help available for students with mental disorders, but

see Depression, page 4

3 U.S. soldiers, dozens of Iraqis killed by bombings

Robert H. Reid
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bombers struck in Baghdad and a northern city Thursday, killing three American soldiers and nearly two dozen Iraqis in a new spasm of violence that has taken at least 66 lives in two days.

A spate of attacks since April

seems aimed at stoking sectarian tension and undermining public confidence only weeks before U.S. combat troops are due to leave Baghdad and other cities, handing security responsibility to Iraq's security forces.

Although recent violence has not

see Iraq, page 4

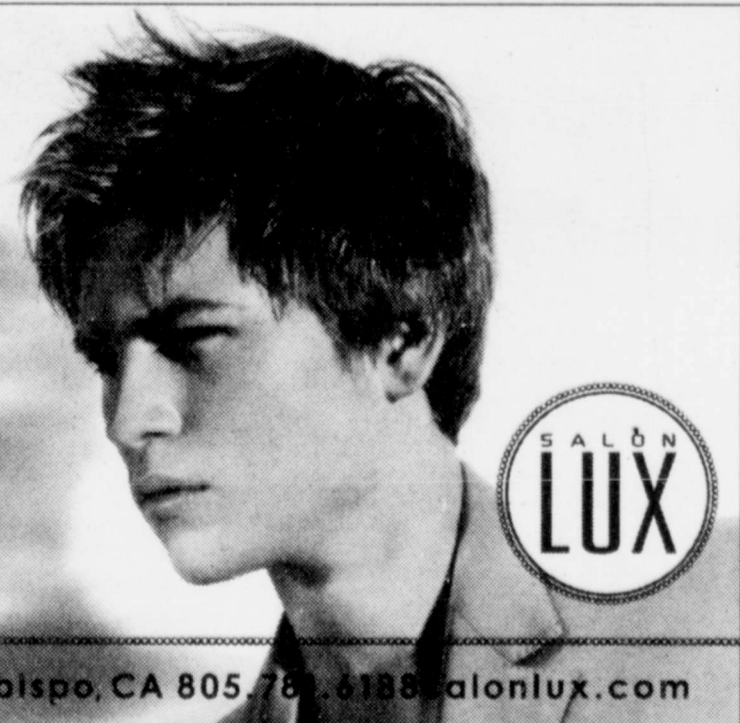
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EMAD MATTI ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iraqi police officers evacuate a dead body from the scene of a suicide car bomb attack in Kirkuk, 290 kilometers (180 miles) north of Baghdad, Iraq, Tuesday. A suicide bomber rammed his car into an Iraqi police truck Tuesday, killing five policemen and three civilians in the northern oil rich city of Kirkuk, said police.

Iraq

continued from page 3

risen to levels of two years ago, it has fueled public unease over whether Iraq's army and police can maintain the security gains since the 2007 U.S. troop surge.

Most of the attacks this year have been on Shiite targets, suggesting that al-Qaida and other Sunni Arab extremists are trying to rekindle sectarian fighting and undermine Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki within his core Shiite constituency.

Attacks have accelerated since the Shiite-led government began cracking down on Sunni paramilitary groups that abandoned the insurgency and joined forces with the U.S. to augment security.

The deadliest blast Thursday occurred in an outdoor market in Baghdad's southern Dora district, when a bomb exploded near an American foot patrol, U.S. and Iraqi officials said.

U.S. officials said three soldiers were killed and an undisclosed number of Americans were wounded. Iraqi police said 12 civilians also were killed and 25 wounded. The Iraqis spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not supposed to release the information.

Army Maj. David Shoupe said U.S. officials could not confirm Iraqi police and witness reports that the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber.

Khalil Hamza, a college student who lives near the market, said he noticed four passengers in a white car watching the Americans as they walked through the area. After the blast, he saw the car speed away with

three men inside.

"Thick smoke filled the area and the shoppers were in panic," he said. "Ambulances arrived and rescuers started to look for the dead and wounded through the smoke and amid cries for help from the wounded."

Earlier Thursday, seven Sunni paramilitaries were killed and eight wounded when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives as they stood in line waiting to be paid at a military base in the northern city of Kirkuk, police Maj. Salam Zankana said.

Paramilitary groups, known as Awakening Councils or Sons of Iraq, have been frequently targeted by al-Qaida and other Sunni insurgent groups.

Sami Ghayashi, 37, who was among the wounded in Kirkuk, said the local council members had been waiting three months to receive their salaries.

"While we were waiting at gate talking to one another a big explosion took place," he said from a hospital bed. "I saw several colleagues dead, among them my cousin. I have no idea how this suicide bomber got among us."

Also Thursday, a bomb exploded in a trash container inside a Baghdad police station, killing three policemen and wounding 19 others, an Iraqi police official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information.

The attacks came a day after a car bomb exploded near a group of restaurants in a Shiite neighborhood of northwest Baghdad, killing 41 people and wounding more than 70.

It was the capital's first major car bombing since May 6 and the dead-

liest in the city since twin car blasts killed 51 people in another Shiite neighborhood, Sadr City, on April 29.

Despite those attacks, security in Baghdad remains much better than a few years ago, when the rumble of explosions reverberated daily through the city. In recent months, violence has been cyclical, with periods of calm punctuated by brief series of high-profile attacks.

Nonetheless, the limited attacks have stoked public anger over the failure of Iraqi security forces to prevent bombings, especially in areas where large numbers of civilians congregate.

U.S. troops are due to leave Iraqi cities by the end of next month under terms of the U.S.-Iraq security agreement that took effect Jan. 1. President Barack Obama plans to remove combat troops from the country by September 2010, with all U.S. forces out of Iraq by the end of 2011.

In wake of the recent attacks, parliament's defense and security committee plans to meet Sunday to review the security situation, a Kurdish member of the panel, Firyad Rawn-douzi, said.

He blamed the violence on al-Qaida and Saddam Hussein's Sunni-dominated Baath party, saying they "have regrouped recently and were able to revive some of their cells."

"The information we have is that the Baath party is taking the lead in conducting attacks now and al-Qaida has retreated to second place," Rawn-douzi said. "Some of our security forces have slacked recently after the improvement in the security situation and this has given some freedom to the terrorists to move."

-Associated Press writers Sameer N. Yacoub in Baghdad and Yahya Barzanji in Sulaimaniyah contributed to this report.

Depression

continued from page 3

"there's still a stigma associated with mental health issues and so a lot of people don't want to go to those services. They feel like they're less cool or something like that if they go. It's like a sign of vulnerability."

Megan Salame, a sophomore studying civil engineering at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., says she'd turn first to her parents if she felt depressed. But she hastened to add, "Depressed — I don't really like to use that word because it sounds so negative."

Mental health disorders like depression typically begin relatively early in life, doctors say, and college is a natural time for symptoms to emerge.

The AP-mtvU poll surveyed students at 40 U.S. colleges, exploring the students' state of mind and the pressures they face, including strains from the tough economy. It found substantial numbers of students with symptoms of depression, many of them failing to receive professional help.

Among the poll results:

—Nine percent of students were at risk of moderate to severe depression. That's in line with a recent medical study that found 7 percent of young people had depression.

—Almost a quarter of those with a parent who had lost a job during the school year showed signs of at least mild depression, more than twice the percentage of those who hadn't had a parent lose a job. More than twice as many students whose parents had lost a job said they had seriously considered ending their own life, 13 percent to 5 percent.

—Among those who reported serious symptoms of moderate depression or worse, just over a quarter had ever been diagnosed with a mental health condition.

—More than half of those who reported having seriously considered suicide at some point in the previous year had not received any treatment or counseling.

—Just a third of those with moderate symptoms of depression or worse had received any support or treatment from a counselor or mental health professional since starting college.

—Nearly half of those diagnosed with at least moderate symptoms weren't familiar with counseling resources on campus.

Anne Marie Albano, an associate professor of clinical psychology at Columbia University, said college is a "tender age" developmentally,

a period when young adults start taking responsibility for their lives. They're selecting careers, moving toward financial independence, establishing long-term relationships, perhaps marrying, having children.

The most troubling thing coming out of the AP-mtvU poll and other studies of young adults dealing with depression, she said, is that "they don't get help" at a time when they're just venturing off on their own.

"They have to learn to become their own monitors about their mental health and yet they have no training to do that," she said.

Alison Malmon, whose older brother, Brian, committed suicide when she was a freshman at the University of Pennsylvania in 2000, decided to do something about it.

After searching unsuccessfully for a group that she could bring to campus that would encourage students to talk about mental health issues and seek help, Malmon created Open Minds.

That group has grown into the nonprofit Active Minds, with chapters on more than more than 200 campuses.

Malmon, 27, executive director of the nonprofit, says students don't have to worry about how to draw the line between everyday blues and clinical depression.

"You don't need to have a serious, diagnosable depression to go talk to someone," she said. "If you feel down or if you feel like you're not yourself, go talk to somebody about it."

The AP-mtvU poll found that 84 percent of students said they'd know where to turn for help if they were in serious emotional distress or thinking about hurting themselves.

Most said they'd go first to friends or family. Twenty percent said they'd try school counseling.

That means it may be up to friends and family to guide students toward professional help where warranted, said Malmon.

Dr. Thomas Insel, director of the National Institute for Mental Health, said students need to understand that depression is "a very treatable illness."

Campus counseling centers are a good resource, he said, although they're not all set up take care of serious mental illnesses.

"There should be somebody there who could at least assess this, and in some cases offer reassurance that 'I'm sure you'll feel better after exams are over,'" he said. wSerious cases can be referred for treatment, he said — "and treatment works."



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arts and entertainment

Arts and Entertainment Editor: Emilie Egger
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music column

Au Revoir Simone's new record will put you in your place

Here's the thing. Au Revoir Simone has the potential to be written off as total manufactured hipster bullshit. They are three girls, who look like they just stepped out of the Urban Outfitters catalog, singing softly and coaxing gentle melodies out of a pile of synthesizers and Casios. Their name manages to be both kitschy (for being a Pee-Wee's Great Adventure reference) and pretentious (for being French). And to top it all off, they're from Williamsburg, Brooklyn (Otherwise known as "Fucking-Hipster-Williamsburg").

So this being my first encounter with the band, I had some reservations when I started listening to "Still Night Still Light," but I was genuinely weirded out when Au Revoir Simone seemed to anticipate my scoffing and then immediately throw it back in my face, giving me a harsh reprimand with the album's opening lyrics:

"Don't tell me it's another likely story." It took them about seven seconds after that to utterly destroy what remained of my flimsy defenses.

It would be easy to credit my pushover conversion entirely to my pathetically impotent willpower (not a stretch), but I think the tenacity of the band's songcraft is the real culprit here. Far from a flavor of the week creation, Au Revoir Simone (Annie Hart, Erika Foster and Heather D'Angelo) have been developing their sound since 2003. This is their third release on their own label, Our Secret Record Company, but the band really began to take off in the last year or so.

Songs on this record revolve around carefully layered synths and vocals that derive their emotive impact from their detached, wounded indifference. Now, this description might seem indicative of a band somewhere between Stereolab and CasioTone for the Painfully Alone with three vaginas, but there are a couple of caveats to that: There's some super-cute all-girl harmonizing here, and the pop hooks have the immediately accessible-



COURTESY PHOTOS

Au Revoir Simone released their album "Still Night Still Light" this month on Our Secret Record Co.

ity of Bubblicious Gum.

The frantic "Anywhere You Looked" is the catchiest example; it's the kind of song that convinces you (against all reason) that you should sing along every time you hear it, even though you never can quite keep up with the tempo, and you inevitably just look like a fat tool (kind of like that Third Eye Blind song).

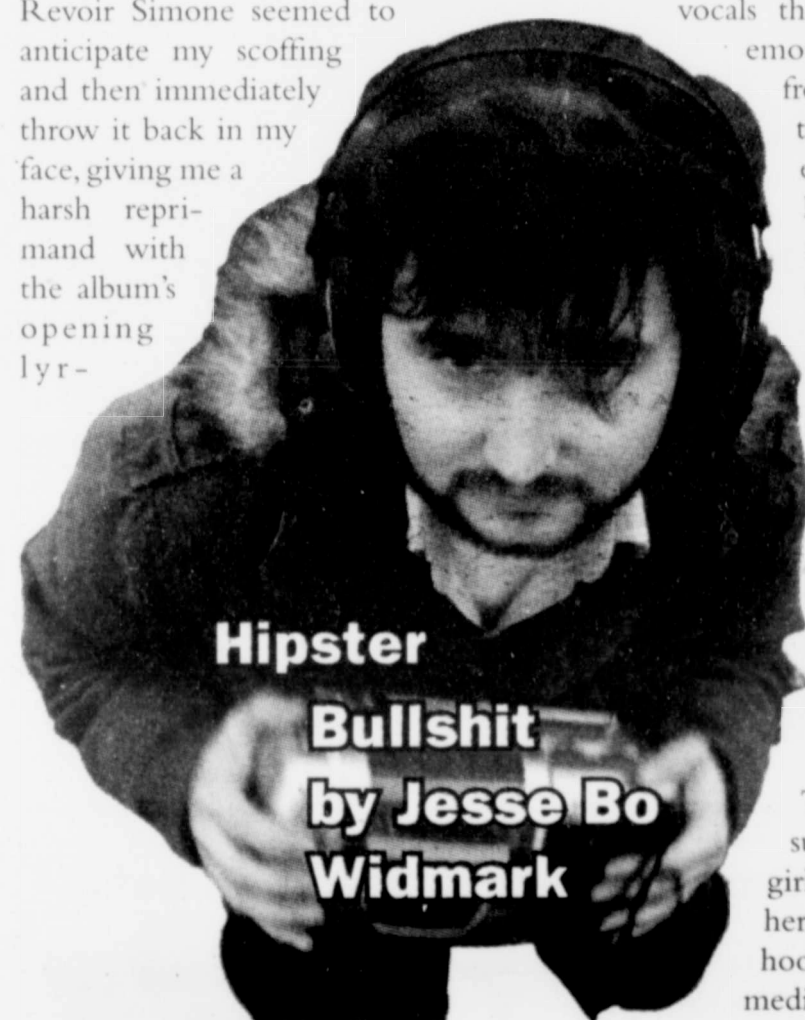
When the girls settle down and get contemplative, as on "Trace a Line," they are "getting drunk in taxi cabs and writing names on backs of hands" or deciding to "let our plants die" in "Organized Scenery." This kind of literal imagery can be powerful, especially in conjunction with the resigned, intimate



delivery.

Irresistible is not too strong a word for Au Revoir Simone. Just try not to fall in love when they almost whisper in your ear, "I'm the one you won't regret," on the gossamer "The Last One." Don't judge them by their cute frocks, they're for real.

Jesse Bo Widmark is a KCPR dj and a mustang daily music columnist



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Mustang Daily

"Just a little crush. He gave me a Risk
Analysis textbook. That turns me on."

MUSTANG DAILY OPINION/EDITORIAL

Friday, May 22, 2009

Editor in chief: Marlice van Romburgh

Managing Editor: Giana Magnoli

mustangdaily@gmail.com

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12

Bring political talk back from taboo status

Josh Green

DAILY CALIFORNIAN (UC BERKELEY)

When did it become a party foul to talk politics in public?

At a recent wedding reception I started talking politics with an Orange County Republican who I thought was actually pretty articulate for a guy who thought McCain would make a better president than Obama. There is always an unavoidable, and often annoying, pattern when you have to engage in small talk with strangers.

"Oh, so what do you do? Graduate school? Political Science? Oh, at Berkeley, hmhm (insert knowing glance, smile or sneer). So, what do you think of Obama?"

God, I hate small talk. This is why I ran from the corporate world to the academic one, a haven for socially inept non-small-talkers.

To make the dull, chatty stuff of barbecues and parties interesting I often try to get a few people to mix it up with me. Just to avoid death by boredom, most of the time.

But at this wedding reception I looked around the table and realized that the OC Man and I were the only ones comfortable with the politics repartee. In fact, some people were visibly squirming. I suppose they were worried that some kind of donnybrook would break out and ruin the wedding. But it's more likely that half didn't know enough about politics to get in on the conversation, and the other half thought that asking others about their political views is like belching loudly at the table.

Maybe it's only natural that people don't want to get personal with complete strangers. Rapping about politics, for some, is kind of like cracking your best ethnic jokes before you've figured out if everyone in the room is cool with it. Bad idea.

I try not to judge those who would rather talk about the latest funny cat video on YouTube than the future of the country. But I've found it impossible not to judge. One woman I know does not vote at all because she doesn't follow politics and doesn't see the point of voting. These are people I cannot relate to.

The Internet's great wealth of information creates a paradox in participatory democracy. The more information we have, the less interested we are in the things that determine how our society survives, like, say, who calls the shots in Washington or Sacramento. Political junk-

ies' cup runneth over now with more than newspapers could ever provide before: Hourly updates of when the president goes to the bathroom, polls taken every day, analysis ad nauseum. But for all the normal folks, there's even more out there to distract them away from the political realm. For most Berkeley students the priority list for seeking information probably goes like this: 1. YouTube. 2. Facebook. 3. Porn. 4. Wikipedia (for really accurate academic research). ... 81. Politics.

There's no amount of preachy finger-wagging that will get people to care about politics. It has to come from a personal revelation that other people, those with power, control your universe, and that the vote and our system of government is really the only check we have on those people. If we're afraid to talk about it over the keg, the watercooler or the wedding cake then what are the chances that more people are going to have that revelation?

I suggest some political icebreakers to loosen up the political stiffness at the table. "Hey, did you hear? No more jobs next year. Yep, they're fresh out. Oh, and we'll all get dropped from our health care plans, but no problem, I hear there's a great do-it-yourself doctoring site on the Web. Man, how 'bout that Social Security, eh? All dried up before we hit 65, too bad we're paying to keep our great grandparents alive today."

Politics isn't personal or intimate and therefore shouldn't be saved just for friendly circles. Politics also isn't how the press covers it at the moment: as a sporting event between two old rival teams where we can watch battles between heroes and villains. Politics is about how we live together without killing each other, and what's more important than that?

The ColStewart Effect has accomplished a lot. Those two shows alone have given college students more of a reason to pay attention and a little stress relief, too. But I'd like to see the dorm chatter (and wedding reception banter) focus on the meat and potatoes of politics, too, like whether we can pay for health care, or if Berkeley-ans who put the cap and gown on this week will have jobs by 2010.

— Originally published in the Daily Californian at UC Berkeley.

[what others say]

select commentary from other
university newspapers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SPJME should focus less on Israel, more on other Middle Eastern issues

I have an issue with SJPME's wall display brought to campus earlier this week. For a club that purports to "promote awareness and dialogue of issues dealing with the Middle East" and promotes the banner for "Justice and Peace,"¹ the club's events have not shown to deal with any issue but Israel. This week's events, 60 percent of which focus on Israel, give the impression that issues in the Middle East are mostly due to Israel.

Back in March, Grace Kirschner, co-president of SJPME, told the Mustang Daily that "The club will hold a week long event in May, focusing on a different country each day to further expose the culture and new issues each country faces."² This week's events highlight only two — Israel and Iraq.

When does the discussion regarding the women's rights in Saudi Arabia begin? How does Israel (which comprises 0.17 percent of the land) become the majority of the Middle East discussion?

Perhaps this club should amend its title to Students for Justice and Peace in Palestine, as this has been the modus operandi for the last three years. I call on you, members of SJPME, to show us that there are other causes of instability in the Middle East. Inform and engage us about topics other than Israel, and stop dominating the discussion about Israel/Palestine.

Jacob Kory

electrical engineering junior
and president of Cal Poly Israel
Alliance

1. Club charter, ASI Club directory accessed May 20, 2009

2. "Students For Justice and Peace in the Middle East bring politics to the forefront." Mustang Daily, March 3, 2009

Responses to "Four Cal Poly students charged in Starkey's death"



Carson was my friend and floor mate here in Yosemite. There are only 12 of us on our floor, so we are all very close. His death was a tragedy that shook our lives and should not be forgotten, but as his friend and somebody who is still emotionally involved in this, I've got to say that learning about these young men facing criminal charges does nothing to set my mind at ease. I've never met them, but I can nearly guarantee you that the guilt they feel is more painful than any time they will do in prison. Sending these boys to jail won't make anything better. It will only spread pain and suffering into more lives as a result of a single, tragic accident. Nobody wanted Carson to die. These guys didn't hold him down and force him to drink. Sure, they encouraged it. They facilitated

the atmosphere, but Carson drank the alcohol. He chose to consume beyond his physical limit and died as a result. That was his choice. I love Carson, but punishing these students for his death doesn't feel right to me. Just a thought.

— John D.

Response to "Four Cal Poly students charged in Starkey's death"

John, I wanted to thank you for your well thought reply. I feel that too often people jump to blame others when the situation may be fuzzy. No doubt this was a hazing incident. I appreciate that you are able to see another side to this and can understand guilt that comes along with this. My heart goes out to Carson's family and friends, including those at Poly and in Texas. It is unfortunate that the fraternity as a whole made a decision that was most likely clouded by thoughts of

fun and excitement. My heart also goes out to those men; they will have to live with this for the rest of their lives. I hope they can learn from this and strive to be better men, to live up to the ideals Sigma Alpha Epsilon holds for them; ideals that they forgot about.

— Kelsy

I agree with you John regarding the fact that Carson made the final decision to drink as much as he did. But it's also important to not forget as a pledge you look up to the members in the greek system and often see them as mentors. So when they encourage a certain behavior, you don't want to let them down, even if you know it's wrong. The power of influence someone can have on another life is truly unbelievable. It may be hard to believe that something to this extreme can happen as a result, but had they not set the situation up this most likely would not have

happened. Yes, the guilt in the end is going to be the worst part of this situation for them, but the reality is, they did something wrong and they need to be punished. These situations have happened before at other colleges, so these 'boys' knew what the penalties would be for their actions if their hazing, which isn't allowed to begin with, went wrong. Just another thought.

— Alyssa

I also agree with John that it was Carson's choice. Yet, delivering the right amount of punishment will have a long term impact on others in the future. Future members of the fraternity will be cautious with alcohol when they recall that someone was charged with a felony for it. This in turn may prevent another death from occurring. However, there may be other ways of sending the right message than locking students up in jail.

— Matt

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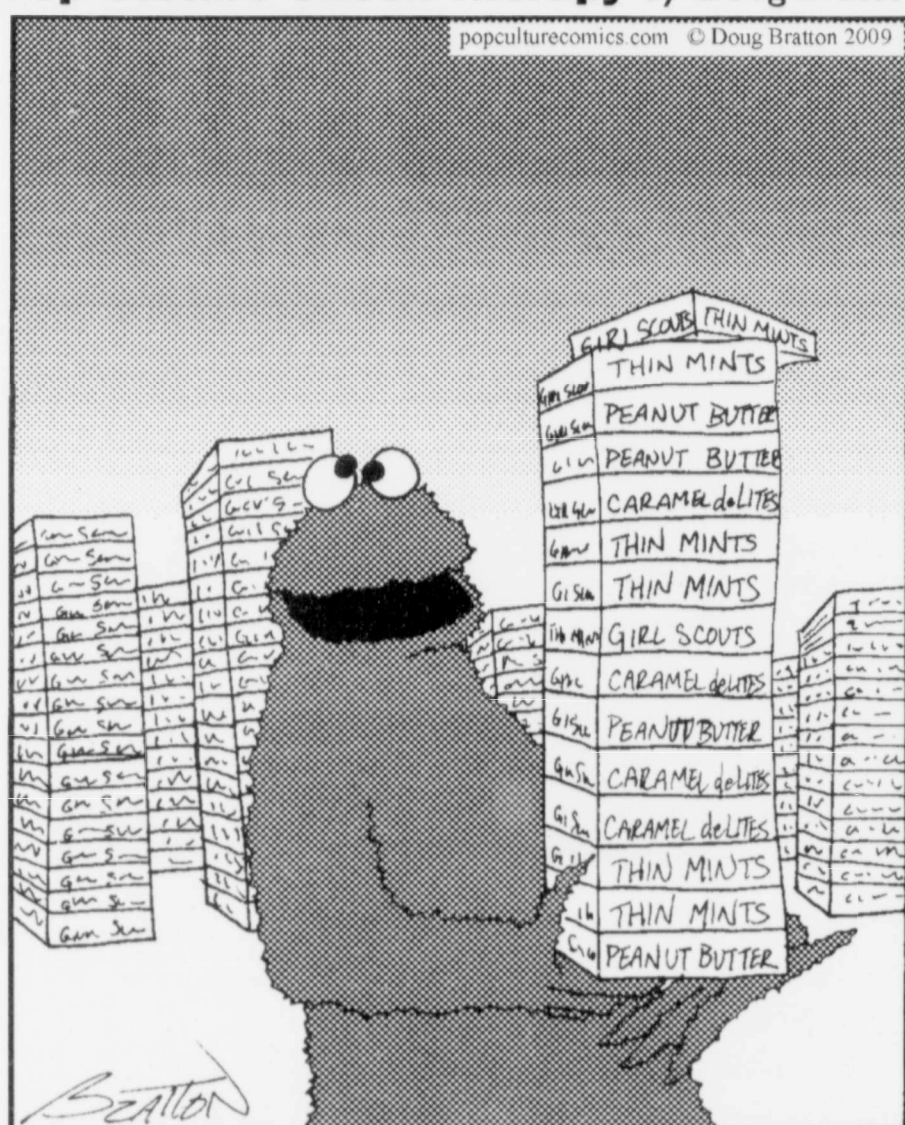
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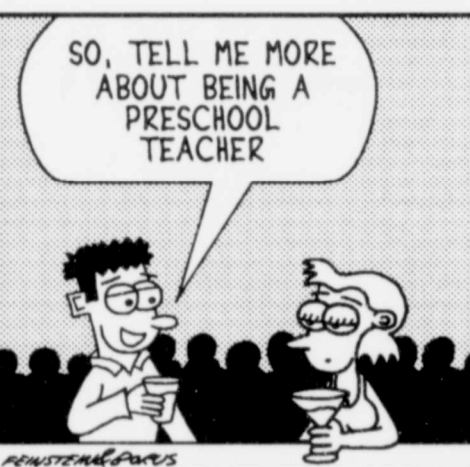
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Girls & Sports by Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



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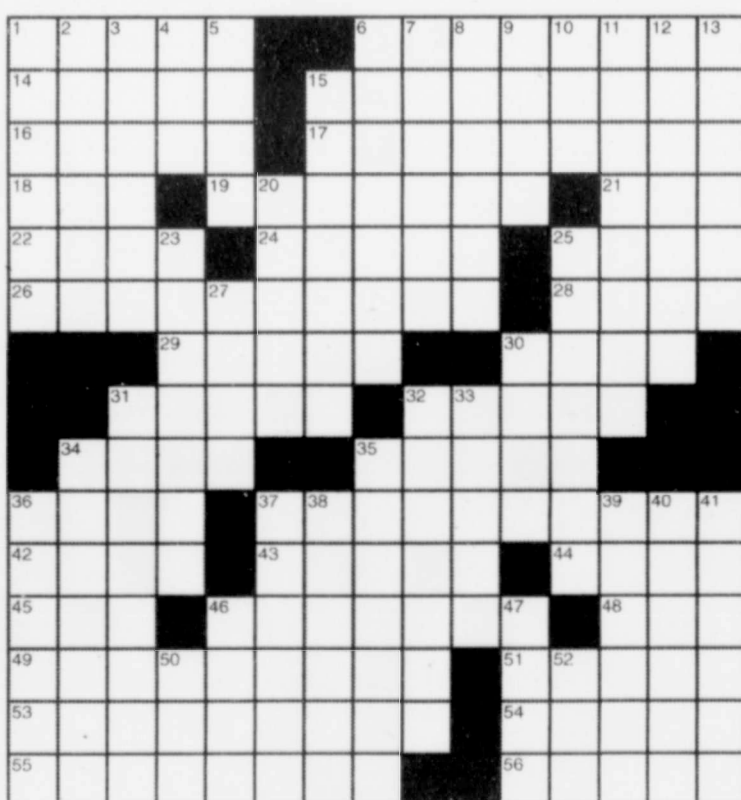
Edited by Will Shortz

No. 0417

- Across**
- 1 Apologies, in Apulia
 - 6 Slow-smoked Southern grub
 - 14 Some nest sites
 - 15 "No, no, this one's on me"
 - 16 Many rappers' personas
 - 17 Read rights to, as a perp
 - 18 Work in a gallery
 - 19 One way to turn
 - 21 Parisian possessive
 - 22 Something Mr. Olympia lacks
 - 24 Play
 - 25 Rec rm. locale, often
 - 26 French kings' emblem
 - 28 Picnic places
 - 29 Dark times abroad
 - 30 Hot pot spot
 - 31 Where many lines are dropped
 - 32 Appt. book headings
 - 34 It can be cracked
 - 35 Frijoles go-with
 - 36 Like lumber in a mill
 - 37 Information, slangily
 - 42 Side for passage
 - 43 Split up
 - 44 Key of Mahler's Symphony No. 1: Abbr.
 - 45 "Fresh Air" aier
 - 46 Considering, with "of"
 - 48 Letters in some church names
 - 49 Handles
 - 51 Puritan
 - 53 Our neighbor's nickname, with "the"
 - 54 Not inadvertent
 - 55 On the lookout
 - 56 Fast results?
- Down**
- 1 Depart
 - 2 John Wayne title marshal of 1973
 - 3 Anatomical hangers
 - 4 Div.
 - 5 Petrol brand
 - 6 Stars of "90210," e.g.
 - 7 How something might be familiar
 - 8 Event held each summer and winter
 - 9 Crack
 - 10 Not an upgrade: Abbr.
 - 11 Per se
 - 12 Montana State University setting
 - 13 Story lines of Indiana Jones films
 - 15 Near Eastern hospices
 - 20 Depths of despair
 - 23 Podiatrists' concerns
 - 25 Overwhelmed and destroyed
 - 27 Monday morning quarterback, maybe

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Puzzle by Corey Rubin

- 30 "Lost" character Jin-Soo
- 31 Coca-Cola product
- 32 The perfect match, for some
- 33 Loyalty
- 34 Crack of dawn, old-style
- 35 Like some classes and books
- 36 Painter Botticelli
- 37 Park since 1912
- 38 How some people shop
- 39 Warren Buffett, e.g.
- 40 Kind of ceremony
- 41 Sends packing
- 46 Singapore, for one
- 47 Certain sub
- 50 Hosp. employee
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women's lacrosse

Women's lacrosse faced stiff competition at nationals



COURTESY PHOTO

Colorado State broke Cal Poly's seven-year national championship streak last year the teams faced off in a battle for seventh place May 9.

Alex Kacik

MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly women's lacrosse team was out for retribution as it found itself battling against a familiar opponent during its final game at the Women's Division Intercollegiate Associates National Championship — Colorado State.

It was hard because we do have a younger team that hasn't had national exposure. A bunch of D1 players played on club level and we were able to compete.

—Ashley Hemmen
senior midfielder

In last year's championship game, the Rams beat seven-time champion Cal Poly by scoring the final six goals to overcome the Mustangs 8-5 in overtime. Yet, this year was a bit different; the squads weren't competing for a championship, but for seventh and eighth place.

Cal Poly's season ended May 9 with an eighth-place standing after losing to Colorado State.

During the past two trips to nationals, the Mustangs have witnessed the vast improvement of the competition, finishing second and eighth out of nearly 170 club teams.

"All the other teams have improved drastically," said junior midfielder Amber Curry, noting that the sport is growing on the West Coast. "Last year when we lost, there was a new pressure that showed us that we could lose; with no dominating (team) it made everybody push that much harder."

The Mustangs goalie Paige Spal-

ding went down in writhing pain after stepping awkwardly during a midseason game. It was worst-case scenario for the junior and her team, tearing her ACL and MCL, an injury "that really put us on our heels," head coach Mike Windall said. It took the team months to find and train a new goalie, Spalding said.

"We didn't have the experience (at goal that) a nationally ranked teams needs to have going into nationals," junior midfielder Bonnie Burtis said. "The offense could only do so much."

The club changed from an aggressive first-half team to a second-half squad because they were consistently playing from behind due to the instability at goal, Curry said. Cal Poly played attacking defense prior to Spalding's injury, but were forced to adapt a protective defense to aid its adjusting goalies, she added.

"It was a whole new dynamic we had to work with and affected our game plan," Curry said. "We were always playing catch up, but (doing so) established leadership."

Freshman defenseman Stephanie Shaffer and senior midfielder Ashley Hemmen split time at goal during nationals, two key assets that threw off the team's dynamic in their absence, Windall said. Yet Burtis said Hemmen thrived under pressure, surprising the competition after minimal training by earning All-Tournament honors and gaining the respect of her opponents, one of which came up to her and acknowledged her stellar play.

"She gave up everything for the team," Spalding said. "That right there says more about a team than winning."

Hemmen said she was impressed her team could compete with Division 1 players and was excited to undertake the leadership role of goalie and hopefully inspire her team.

"It was hard because we do have a younger team that hasn't had national exposure," she said. "A bunch of D1 players played on club level and we were able to compete."

After finishing the season 7-3, No. 5 Cal Poly began the 16-team national championships by defeating No. 12 Georgia 15-14, a close first-round competition the Mustangs weren't accustomed to, Burtis said. The Mustangs were forced to play from behind during the next three games against improved national competition, a formidable task.

"A lot of these teams are coming out to beat us, we have a long history of being the best so they are fired up to play us," Burtis explained. "For us it was just another game; we tried to work on that mindset — approaching games knowing that this team wants to kill us."

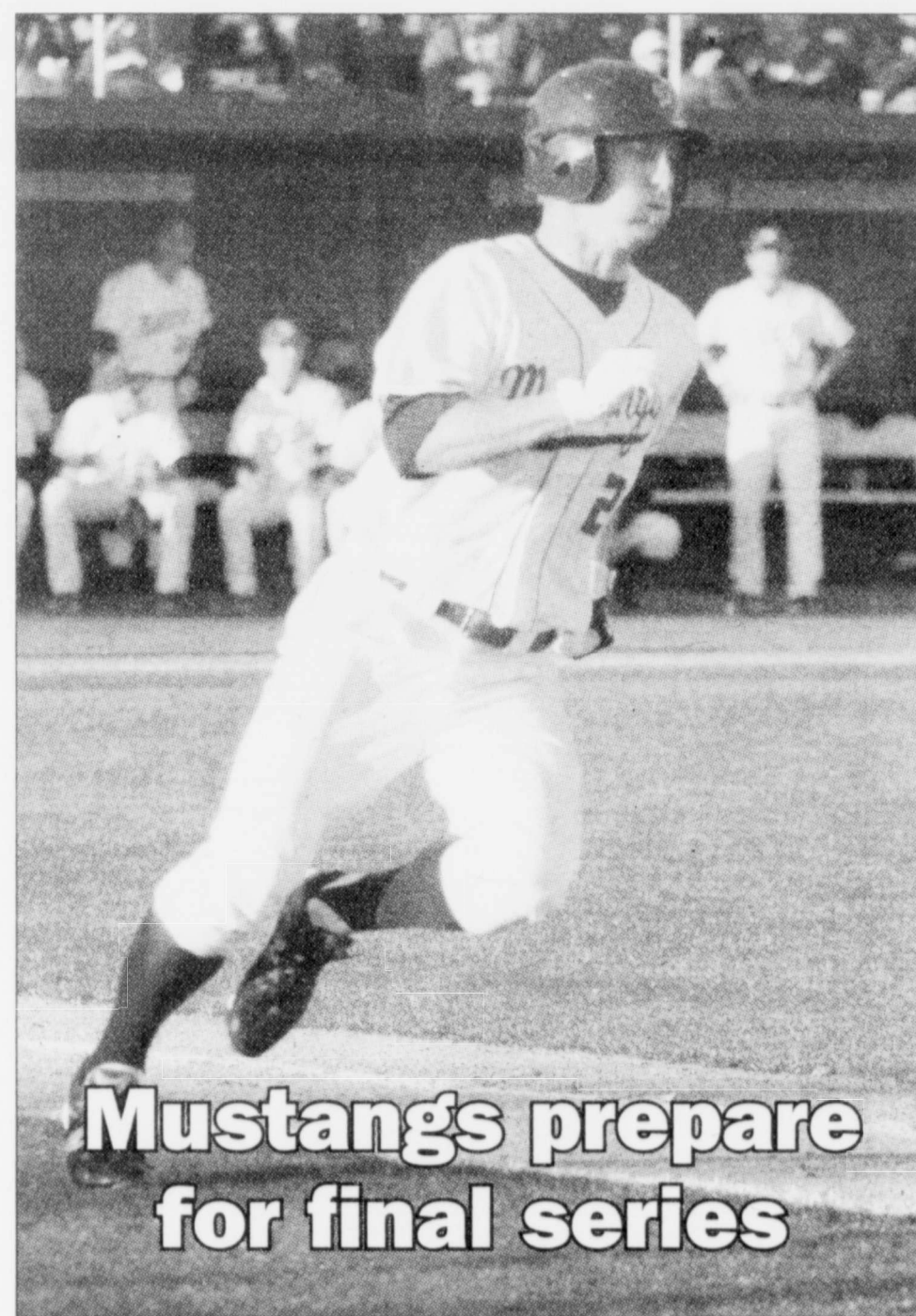
The Mustangs will focus on maintaining consistent training during the offseason to improve their play, Curry said.

"We really hadn't had to push ourselves in the past," she explained. "Now (the competition) is keeping with their training programs throughout the year, so we must incorporate more things to prepare for the season."

According to Burtis, a parent of a University of Michigan player came up to Cal Poly defenseman Laura Hopson's mom after the Mustangs lost its third game 8-10 to commend Cal Poly.

"Cal Poly raised the bar so high that no team could ever reach it for seven years, and now they are finally starting to get there," the opposing team's parent said.

baseball



Mustangs prepare for final series

NICK CAMACHO MUSTANG DAILY

The Cal Poly baseball team (36-17, 13-18 Big West Conference) will host UC Riverside (31-10, 10-11) in the final series of the season tonight at 6 p.m. at Baggett Stadium.

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